as the Bill is passed the mushroom growth of sub-standard colleges will be controlled. Similarly, the Dental Council of India is engaged in amending the Dentists Act,1948 to provide for prior permission of the Council to check the growth of sub-standard dental colleges.

Cases of Gastro-enteritis

527. DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of cases of Gastro-enteritis that have been reported during the last four months in the country;

(b) what is the number of cases of deaths due to the disease, State-wise; and

(c) what steps Government have taken to contain and eradicate the disease?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI D. K. THARA DEVI SIDDHARTHA): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Unrecognised Medical Colleges

528. SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news item published in the Indian Express dated the 7th November 1991, under the caption. Unorganised Medical colleges prepare to spew graduates on unsuspecting souls";

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto;

(c) what are the reasons for lack of a monitoring system; and

(d) what steps are being taken to strengthen the machinery for reducing the dangers likely to arise from this situation and also for re-examining the cases of existing medical colleges?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI D. K. THARA DEVI SIDDHARTHA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The Government are aware of the danger of proliferation of sub-standard medical colleges and have accordingly taken action to amend the Indian Medical Council Act to provide necessary powers to the Medical Council of India to approve or disapprove the establishment of new colleges after taking into consideration various factors including facilities of staff, equipment, accommodation, etc. As regards existing medical colleges, there is already a provision under section 19 of the Indian Medical Council Act, 1956 to enable the Council to recommend to the Central Government the derecognition of any medical college which does not confirm to the standards prescribed by it.

529. [*Transferred to the 3rd December, 1991*]

Doctors in India

530. SHRI S. K. T. RAMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the estimated number of doctors at present in the country; and

(b) what steps are being taken to provide more medical facilities to the people?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI D. K. THARA DEVI SIDDHARTHA): (a) The estimated number of registered medical practitioners in different systems of medicine in the coun-